The Enemy Doesn't Know How Many We Are:
A Proposal for Building An Insurgency

Contents:

Dedication
Revolutionary pledge
Introduction
The US state is currently at war with its own population, those in the global south and leftist factions
The fight will be won
Rebellions
An insurgency is needed to succeed
What does it take to build an insurgency?
1) political and social organizations
2) fighting forces
3) political education
4) revolutionary culture
5) material considerations
6) strategic timing

Who would support an insurgency
Why an insurgency would succeed in the US
How to start building an insurgency
Until we meet
Further reading

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Dedication

Embarking on this historical mission, it is imperative to pay respects to those who have come before us, fought the most difficult battles and paved the path of struggle with their fortitude. Without them the proposals put forward in this text would not exist, nor the potential of liberation. Specifically we acknowledge Russell Maroon Shoatz, Safiya Bukhari, Carlos Marighella, Lucy Parsons, Kuwasi Balagoon, Lorenzo Orsetti, Yahya Sinwar, Sekou Odinga, Dedan Kimathi, and the many others unnamed for the sake of space, and all those whose names we will never know because they were so brave.

Revolutionary pledge

"Positions are seldom lost because they have been destroyed, but almost invariably because the leader has decided in his own mind that the position cannot be held."[i]

This observation opens up a world of possibility based on the sheer will not to be deterred. Unlike the paid mercenaries of a state army, liberation forces are gifted with a deep motivation for the struggle. As a guerrilla commander in the Kurdish HPG once noted, there can be a successful action with just one fighter if they have the will and determination to succeed[ii]. Fighting a battle is first and foremost a mental feat, and the trials people in the movement face against the armed henchmen of the United States have hardened the resolve of brave political actors. The possibilities that spring steadfastness underpins the following text. This text lays out a strategy for fighting an asymmetrical war against a much better armed and more technologically advanced enemy. The war of the small against the mighty will be won by fortitude and determination.

HPG teacher instructs students in the art of guerrilla war

Further reading

Warfare Manuals
The Art of War, Sun Tzu
On Organizing Urban Guerrilla Units, Field Marshall D.C.
Handbook for Volunteers of the Irish Republican Army
On Guerrilla Warfare, Mao Tse-Tung
Guerrilla Warfare, Che Guevara
The Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla, Carlos Marighella
The Life and Death of the East Asia Anti-Japan Armed Front, Max Res

Experiences in the Struggle
My Life in the Black Panther Party, Field Marshall D.C.
Maroon the Implacable: The Collected Writings of Russell Maroon Shoatz
Democratic Autonomy in Northern Kurdistan
The Fire and the Word: A History of the Zapatista Movement, Gloria Muñoz Ramírez
Mau Mau From Within a book by Karari Njama, Donald L Barnett
The War Before: A True Life Story, Safiya Bukhari

Counterinsurgency
The Other Side of COIN Kristian Williams
Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, David Galula
Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam, John A. Nagl
The U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, David Petraeus
Warfighting, US Marine Corps

Theory
The Philosophy of the Urban Guerrilla, Abraham Guillen

Introduction

For many decades the movement for liberation in the United States has been on the back foot. Overwhelmed by the struggle to survive, many find themselves and their groups reacting to the brutality of the state through programs like Cop Watch, ICE Watch, and demonstrations or encampments. These initiatives are important, even essential, but always in response to the violent overtures of institutionalized racism. They can mitigate a rough situation, help people in a one-off crisis or show solidarity, but no recent attempt has presented a way to win the war against humanity waged by the US government.

There are many examples of oppressed people throughout history overcoming their oppressors or colonizers, but not many with a long standing anarcho-communist result. On the other hand, there are a lot of far left groups that currently exist that mean well and have excellent analyses but could benefit from strategic direction in order to become revolutionaries. The question for all those on the side of humanity: how to win the war that has been launched against communities of color? How to effectively overthrow the state? How to organize towards a liberated society? Taking example from diverse insurgent forces, this text will look at how to adapt effective organizational models to support an anarcho-communist revolution. Armed with this knowledge and committed to see a revolution through, a nascent movement would have the capacity to build a force that can overturn the state and capitalism while constructing liberatory communities of the future.

The US state is currently at war with its own population, those in the global south and leftist factions

The US was built on human misery, from the slave trade to the genocide of indigenous people. This foundation has seeped through its ideology. With its mentality of domination, the US wants to obliterate its adversaries rather than see people live with dignity or according to revolutionary principles. The COINTELPRO attacks against the Black Panthers and the bombing of the MOVE headquarters line up squarely with its support of the far right in Central and South America. The weight of this reality can be read on the faces of people and felt in day to day interactions: people have to accept the brutality of the United States to live here.

The state makes its war against people of color clear through the development of Cop Cities, the blatantly racist judicial system, routine torture in state and federal prisons, its brutal reaction to uprisings and the military tactics and equipment they bring into city police departments.[iii] The United States views not only people of color as enemy combatants but those on the left who fight for marginalized people. The legacy of the Red Scare and the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti is alive and well, and visible in the inability of the left to counter ICE raids and police executions. The question isn't if the movement should start a war with the state. The war is already here. Instead the question is if people of conscience who live under this regime decide to fight back.

Wayne Pharr, Black Panther Party

Until we meet

Setting out to build an insurgency in the US from the current state of the movement might seem like a monumental task but it is important to keep some precedents in mind.

Every organization and every armed struggle had to start from nothing. Many began in even less favorable conditions and with much less support. Know that it is possible to fight through extreme adversity when our organizations are strong, and always remember that it is possible to create the best conditions for the movement.

The situation in the US makes it ripe for political change. The US is flailing politically and economically. People are searching for solutions for basic survival and want to see the development of a capable struggle. Concerted and functional organization creates confidence in people and an insurgency has the capacity to turn a sustainable and humanizing society into a reality.

The tides of political change have been decisively shifting within the last 20 years. The veneer of civil society has eroded, making activism essentially useless. Where previously many on the far left have vocalized a more tempered political vision, now they are taking their cues from the most serious insurgent forces like the Resistance in Palestine. The fact that this is one of the last Western colonial bastions materially connects our struggles, giving political actors psychological fortitude and demonstrating how to fight a more militarized enemy. People in the movement in the US are no longer presenting themselves as radicals, but as revolutionaries, a fundamental perspective necessary to transform a wavering movement into a solid and impenetrable insurgency.

We are never too few and it is never too late to start building. Our determination and steadfastness will lead to our success.

This text is written with love for fellow revolutionaries and belief in our collective capacity. Though many will never know who wrote this document, we convey our respect for everyone who chooses this path.

See you on the battlefield!

Written with love by Sofia Valencia

Anarchists in the Spanish Civil War

Fighting back allows people who have historically been oppressed to fully realize themselves through revolutionary struggle. Contrary to what US propaganda espouses, people are not individualized, separate entities. Everyone rises or falls together. When the state tortures someone in prison, bulldozes families in Palestine, or when a person walks past someone sleeping on the street, pieces of their shared humanity are shaved off. The only way to gain them back is through collective struggle: stopping the perpetrators of violence by fighting back with and for others. Commenting on the self-sacrificing action that HPG fighters took against Turkish Aerospace Industries, one writer noted “It is not an exaggeration to say that the only way to truly live is to wage a continuous struggle.”[iv]

Similarly, Wayne Pharr, a Black Panther Party member, who participated in the firefight against police when they raided the BPP office in Los Angeles, explained how he felt in that moment, “I felt free. I felt absolutely free. I was a free negro. I was making my own route. You couldn't get in, I couldn't get out. But in my space, I was the king. In that little space I had, I was the king.”[v] In this moment the historical degradation by the US was overturned when Pharr and his comrades picked up their guns and shot back.

The fight will be won

It is infinitely possible to win this war that has been launched by the US against the population, and humanity in general. What does it mean to win? Winning in this text is defined as: destroying the state structure and capitalism and replacing them with liberatory and egalitarian ways of existing as a society. The organization of a liberated community holds just as true today as it did in revolutionary Spain or the Korean People's Association in Manchuria: self-governance through a federation of councils, production by collectives, personal property held by use rather than private property, defense militias structured according to and defending revolutionary values, resources distributed appropriately amongst the population, expropriation of the enemy class: turning the assets of the enemy into the collective wealth of the new society and prohibiting them from rising and exploiting again.

Rebellions

Rebellions and uprisings do not have the capacity to change people's day to day reality. For example, after the Ferguson Uprising, the police returned with a vengeance. With the state empowered and the movement on the back foot, many of the key participants died in suspicious circumstances, presumably executed by the state. There

wasn't sufficient advancement on an organizational level to expel the police from Ferguson, and defense was not commensurate with any of the gains. There are countless examples in the US of rebellions that are an important expression of dissatisfaction, but without organization, people cannot force the state to permanently retreat and create a new reality in their communities.

Image from the Ferguson uprising, August, 2014

Even a rebellion that overthrows the regime in power does not go far enough. In 2011 Tunisian President Ben Ali left at the behest of protesters but the entire government structure remained, with remnants of the old regime in power. Even though gains were won, such as dismantling the secret police and women's rights, the same fundamental political structure persisted. Likewise in Egypt, President Mubarak fled in response to uprisings, but after a few shifts in power, an American puppet president, El-Sisi took power. These uprisings of the Arab Spring unseated leaders, however without concerted reorganization of society, a transformation was impossible.

It is essential to formulate the struggle not as a reform of or rebellion against the current system, but as a revolutionary movement with clear goals and outcomes. The state must be completely dismantled and social structures have to be rebuilt from the basis of liberatory values.

Summary

1. Decide on the goals, commitments and community agreements of the political organization(s).
    - Determine organizational structure, means of communication and a plan for growth.
    - Create a plan for developing revolutionary culture and conflict resolution.
    - Assign specific duties to each member, making sure these duties overlap.
    - Develop a method for bringing in new members.
    - Develop a metric for measuring success.
2. Develop a multi-pronged fundraising strategy, with proposed expansion for different stages of the struggle.
3. Identify existing social organizations and decide which essential ones need to be developed.
4. Develop a plan for recruiting and training fighters.
    - Decide on a structure for units.
    - Decide on a means for secure communication.
    - Develop a means to confer between political groups and fighting cells on political direction and strategy.
5. Decide what issues to focus on for widespread propaganda.
6. Develop social organizations.
    - Members with key skills and knowledge start building agreed upon social organizations.
    - Assigned members speak with already existing projects about joining forces.
7. Offer political education for potential new members and/or the public.
    - Develop a comprehensive educational program.
    - Have a clear system in place for new members to join.
8. Recruit fighters.
    - Develop a training regimen and assign members to carry out this program.
    - Put material needs in place: safe houses, armories, training areas, workshops.
    - Develop a plan for weapons procurement.

will often have a better model for sociability. Conduct active listening workshops where members practice hearing each other out on matters that don't have high stakes.

A forum for discussing and resolving disagreements is essential. Conflicts can be headed off by principled critique/self-critique sessions, and handled after the fact by mediation teams, for example. Any critique that is issued should come from a place of trust, commitment and belief that the other member is also committed and open to change.

Funding

In the beginning stages multiple and diverse sources of funding should be established. Political work may be supported through monetary and in-kind donations, self-sustaining projects, international funding, kidnapping, extortion and expropriation of the enemy class.

Social organizations can be sustained through donations of the participants and supporters. For example, a school or collective kitchen can take sliding scale or monthly donations.

Comrade businesses can have a dual use of making money for comrades but also, when needed, offering logistical support. For example, companies that use trucks or warehouses will one day be useful for storing and moving materiel. Members who have a clean record can apply for a Federal Firearms License in order to sell arms for their livelihood but also offer a friendly place for comrades to acquire them at cost.

Social organizations can be developed for self-sustainability like growing food, producing clothes, building internet mesh networks, weapons or fuel production. As the US economy continues its downward trajectory, these resources will be necessary not just for supporting the fighters but for broader society.

International support can be sought. Ideologically close allies are ideal for trade and funding. There are many enemies of the US who would be eager to support an insurgency in the US but this must be weighed out with the potential of becoming their proxy.

Kidnapping, extortion and expropriation can be used with caution. They should have the dual purpose of putting pressure on the enemy while also gaining funds. These endeavors should be undertaken in the safest way possible, when the odds are stacked in favor of those doing the actions. It is important not to get too many fighters caught up by activities that should support the growth of the insurgency. For example, digital bank robberies are safer and potentially more lucrative than ones in person or extortion can be based out of another country to decrease the risk.

An insurgency is needed to succeed

Using armed force and social organizations, the goal of an insurgency is to make it impossible for the state to govern its territory, and through political, social and economic organization, effect a liberatory change within that territory. This starts with guerrilla warfare, political polarization, the mobilization of local support, and develops as partisans replace state and capitalist functions with their own.

The objective of an insurgency is to permanently eliminate the state and create long-lasting liberation. This change should replace a capitalist economy with a collective one, change a federal representative government to locally-centered self-governance, remove an exploitative social ethic and instill one that values all members of society and shift from poisoning the land and water to protecting the environment. Fighting forces and political-social organizations are built up simultaneously to, on the one hand, develop liberatory self-governance and collective economies, and, on the other, protect political gains while destroying the state.

Anti-colonial Guinea Bissau shows what an insurgency looks like in practice. Resistance forces built up parallel political and social organizations for years to develop popular support for the struggle. The revolutionary African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) party initiated educational systems, roving hospitals that served fighters and local people and barter bazaars. Amilcar Cabral, the founder of the PAIGC and an agronomist, taught people how to grow food to sustain themselves while also feeding the fighting forces, who would help work the fields with the people. The intertwined growth of revolutionary social organizations and fighting forces made for a complete social transformation within the liberated zones in rural areas that were entirely resistant to Portuguese colonizers.

PAIGC school in Guinea-Bissau

What characterizes an insurgency and differentiates it from a rebellion is that 1) war is waged for abolition of the state, 2) social organizations for self-governance, justice, education, medical care, and other important social projects are built up simultaneously with the war effort, and 3) revolutionary forces work to transform society in the areas they hold.

The remit of an anarcho-communist insurgency is to build a society that is driven by the self-governance of the people. Through the process of engaging in self-governance, people become collectively-minded, self-actualized and responsible for their entire communities. It is ideologically consistent and strategically important to facilitate this type of social organization because: **an insurgency is a war for the population.** If people agree with the political project, they will want to participate and help the fighters. A salient example is the bank tellers who drove Black Liberation Army (BLA) fighters to Chicago from New York overnight when they needed to hide out, or people from local neighborhoods who would give BLA members their guns if they lost theirs during a firefight.[vi] This would not have happened without community support and a certain level of organization created by aboveground groups. An insurgency has been described by counterinsurgent experts as 20% military and 80% political;[vii] another way of articulating the famous Clausewitz quote, "War is a continuation of the policy by other means." Without people supporting the insurgent forces, it is impossible to have a struggle, and people will support if insurgents are creating sustainable means for true liberation.

This text lays out how the comprehensive process of building an insurgency is integral to engaging many people with a range of capacities and abilities in the revolutionary process, increases the development of all people and creates new economic and political systems, all while materially supporting revolutionary fighters.

What does it take to build an insurgency?

There are six main fields to consider: 1) political and social organizations 2) fighting forces 3) political education 4) revolutionary culture 5) material considerations and 6) strategic timing.

1) Political and Social Organizations

Political organizations are expansive assemblies of political actors. Political organizations set up armed factions and social organizations and create the ideological and strategic foundation for both, which, due to this connection, follow consistent

shameful military dictatorship and its monstrosities." (Marighella) The sheer engagement in fighting back against the brutal state, and the motivation of love for oppressed people, is enriching for the participants. Even more so, through the participation in collective armed action, fighters develop qualities such as steadfastness and circumspection, which are ideal qualities for people participating in a revolutionary society. The necessary collectivity of an armed unit increases the fighters' collaborative spirit and ability to think about the whole.

Selflessness is an important quality for a revolutionary, but it is not to indicate a rush towards death. The next sentence that follows the opening Marighella quote for this section is, "Thanks to it, the urban guerrilla can accomplish his principle duty, which is to attack and survive."[xxxi] This is not just pragmatic, being that there are far less insurgents than there are of the enemy, but more importantly, it reflects a value system spread throughout all the insurgent forces and organizations. The well-being of the overall community must be synonymous with fighting prowess. Revolutionary culture is a culture of life.

Revolutionary Culture

The tenure of revolutionary work is presented to the greater public through the culture of political actors. Revolutionary culture should be built on a foundation of participants who are humble, genuine, true to their words and share a longterm commitment to the political struggle. This culture should permeate every activity of a political organization.

All members should be clear, open, honest and hold themselves to the highest standards in terms of their treatment of others. It is important for all political actors to evaluate their motivations: are they doing political work for the sake of their ego, do they have insecurities or are they dealing with mental health challenges? There is role for everyone in developing an insurgency and it is essential that everyone is very honest with themselves and others about their abilities, limitations and personal challenges to know what their role should be. This self-knowledge is essential. Marighella suggests that, "[Guerrilla warfare] is a pledge which the guerrilla makes to himself. When he can no longer face the difficulties, or if he knows that he lacks the patience to wait, then it is better for him to relinquish his role before he betrays his pledge."[xxxii]

In order to begin developing revolutionary culture collectively, it is important to forge agreements on expected behaviors of comrades towards each other and towards the public, their commitments to the organization, what qualities to look for in people who want to join and the process and expectations for people leaving the organization.

Collectivity may be atypical for anyone who was acculturated in the US, but active steps can be taken to develop this skill and set a new standard for revolutionary work. Look to members who did not grow up in the US for advice on this matter. They

work, it would be ideal to recruit and train as many people as possible and as early as possible to be ready to act when the time is right. To do this correctly requires a lengthy process. A few members of political organizations can be tasked with doing this. It is important to keep a separation between fighting forces and social organizations.

Building out the fighting forces must be done with the highest level of discretion. Only comrades who are well known to the recruiter should be invited to participate. Comrades with combat experience can train others. This can happen at ranges but also it will be useful to find and utilize surreptitious training areas. A training program for skills and study can de developed to make sure fighters have the skills they need to do actions and resist entrapment. These skills should be practiced regularly.

Many nighttime affinity groups currently exist whose structure and actions mirror that of a guerrilla unit, as a guerrilla warrior doesn't have to wait for orders to be able to make decisions.[xxix] They are relatively independent, politically well-versed, conduct hit and run strikes, are fluid and flexible, secure because they don't necessarily have to know who comprises other groups and able to produce their own propaganda materials. These groups can be a source of fighters.

It is important however to note the differences between nighttime groups and a developed guerrilla struggle. The extensive tunnel networks in Gaza and Vietnam, for example, could not have been constructed without major coordination and organization. Fighting forces need to decide on a secure structure and a means for coordination from the start. Guerrillas don't need to necessarily know who is in other cells but should have a way to communicate. There should also be a way to communicate between political organizations and fighting forces that should includes ways of determining a greater war strategy. Its important from the outset to also develop plans for sizing up formations in the later stages of the struggle.

Field Marshall DC counsels: “In organizing self-defense groups... the most important consideration is whether or not the person to be incorporated into the group understands fully that what he or she is doing is the right thing to do.”[xxx] Those who hold guns and are fighting the state should embody the most stand up characteristics of a revolutionary. Fighters should be motivated by the political outcomes, embody what it means to be a political actor and carry a full commitment to the struggle because, just like all political organizations, fighting forces should be a prime example of their own liberatory politics. This is conveyed by how guerrillas treat each other and the people, the types of actions taken and the messaging around actions. Independent motivation is also important because guerrilla units need to act without direction, deciding their own missions and developing their own propaganda.

Finding resolute and committed revolutionaries to become guerrillas is essential, but also the act of participating in revolutionary war builds the characters of those involved. “[T]o be an assailant or terrorist is a quality that ennobles any honorable man because it is an act worthy of a revolutionary engaged in armed struggle against the

political objectives.

Political organizations also set up the means for people to administer their own regions. This self-governance can happen through, for example, neighborhood councils, which form the basis for bottom-up style administration. The council is a forum people can use to coordinate to meet their needs, designating groups to handle that work.

Social organizations are responsible for the production and distribution of resources and the creation of infrastructure. Organizations can include food production, hospitals, schools, construction and activities can range from mediating conflicts to providing medical care and education to producing necessities. These organizations are structured in an egalitarian manner and are based on revolutionary perspectives. They displace those of capitalist businesses and the state.

Effective examples of such political organizations had been developed by the DTK in Northern Kurdistan[viii]. There were neighborhood councils, conflict resolution bodies, and youth and women's groups. These bodies made the government of the Turkish state less relevant, as Kurdish people would, for example, utilize DTK mediation over state courts.

Self-governance structures and social organizations create the means for people to feel engaged in day to day life, have determination over their environments and create a material impact. Participation allows for a fundamental shift in values from alienation and competition to looking out for other community members. The well-being of the entire society becomes the responsibility of each person. This reflects the political tenets of the movement, creates collectivity and elicits engagement in revolutionary society and its defense.

Zapatista health promoters

In Chiapas the healthcare system was developed after significant and lengthy discussions with many different parts of the population, incorporating their knowledge, outlooks and concerns. For example, traditional healers were initially hesitant to share their methods but the proposal to care for the greatest amount of people possible convinced them. The final result was an overwhelmingly successful healthcare system tended by volunteer health providers, who administer traditional and Western medicine at regional hospitals. The hospitals serve community members, who, in turn, support the healthcare providers.[ixx]

Social organizations also serve the needs of the armed struggle, intertwining the livelihoods of the fighters and the local community. The fruits of this work are exemplified by Hezbollah. Hezbollah had created armed and social components: welfare, schools, hospitals, supporters with rocket launch rooms in Southern Lebanon. They demonstrated that they care about people's well-being, giving credence to Hezbollah's armed defense of the region. The 'Israeli' pager attacks on Hezbollah members were thus viewed as attacks on the whole population, bringing much of society, even political opponents, together in support of the organization. Immediately following the incident, one prospective eye donor, a taxi-driver named Hussein, explained his motivations to a local broadcaster. “How can I continue to see while they have been blinded?” he said. “The eye that I will donate will protect the nation.”[xi]

When people participate in the process of building and running social organizations, they are actively eroding the state's administrative control. Local people become fighters without ever picking up a gun. An insurgency mobilizes support by normalizing revolutionary social organizations so that regular people use them to, for example, go to the doctor, get food and clothes, become educated, etc. Regular people become political partisans when they participate in self-governance as in the neighbor councils and grandma-run food distributions that cropped up during the Estallido Social uprising in Chile. Or, for example, in Barcelona during the Spanish revolution, neighbors were empowered to physically block bailiffs from entering their neighborhoods to conduct evictions.[xii]

In essence, the battle for administrative functions is what will determine if the state remains in a region or if the insurgent will be successful. Both the insurgent and the state will win legitimacy if people participate in their social organizations. If people call the police when they have a problem, they are strengthening the state, if they call revolutionaries, they strengthen the insurgency.

If the relationship is strong enough, the enemy's attempt to undermine social organizations will be unsuccessful. The Zionist regime enters Tulkarm Refugee Camp in the West Bank of Palestine to destroy infrastructure to try to erode the support base of the resistance. Al-Quds Brigades reports that the effect is the opposite: “Once the raid is over, many people check in on us and express their gratitude that we are safe. When they look at the destruction of the camp, they just say, ‘better to lose your wealth than lose

political outlook and ways of measuring success

The political position of this proposal is intended for the revolutionary left, following an anti-capitalist and anti-colonial perspective. Political groups should be fully committed to the destruction of the United States and its racist history and culture. The guiding question that should inform debates is: what would improve the lives of those who have been and are currently most disadvantaged by white supremacist American society: people of color and those who lack money and resources?

Political organizations can focus their work on building militant, political and economic infrastructure. To do so they should start developing social organizations and fighting forces. There are two ways to start: 1) identify the material needs of an insurgency and comrades with the skills to create those organizations and 2) take stock of groups and resources that already exist that could be aligned to further develop the strategic goals.

While social organizations can be based on the skills and abilities of current members, they shouldn't be exclusively determined on that basis. Consideration should be given to needs of the fighters and needs of community members. For example, some basics needed to support an insurgency include: logistics and infrastructure, communication networks, sources for food and goods for living, community decision making bodies, medical care, and revolutionary education. Likewise, political organizations can consider the acute needs of the people in their areas.

Political education is a foundational aspect of developing the struggle because propaganda and classes can bring in new comrades. Political classes about revolutionary struggle and ideas can attract people who would like to join the political organization, and practical workshops can give them the skills to build out social organizations. Classes and schools can be both for potential organization members and for broader society.

The intention for the social programs is that they should be of far better quality than those of capitalist society. For example, food should be more delicious and wholesome; medical care should be more preventative, caring and accessible; classes should be conducted with the highest level of preparation and research, showing respect for all involved.

There are many revolutionary projects that exist currently that translate well to an insurgent strategy. Food distributions can expand their operations and be further developed to become supplied by comrade farms, for example, increasing self-sufficiency. Conflict resolution groups could be made available to the public to create a body for justice outside of the court system. Medics could receive further training to help build out community health programs and provide medical care for fighters. Always resist the temptation to work with nonprofits. They are structurally aligned with the state.

Even though much groundwork needs to be done before fighting forces start their

The very existence of an insurgency necessitates the development of functional and revolutionary supply chains - a direct challenge to the administration of the state. This is understood by US government and the reason why it felt threatened by Black Panther Party breakfast program, ambulance services, health clinics and education programs. Yet its policy of deprivation continues, creating a need for what insurgents have to offer.

Currently, western civilization is catapulting itself towards impending demise. The failure of Ukraine to gain the upper hand against Russia despite the US pouring money into the conflict and the success of the Axis of Resistance against 'Israel', particularly Ansar Allah's defeat of the US Navy, demonstrate that Western military might is waning. The rise of anti-colonial, anti-West movements in the Sahel and West Asia would not have been possible without this weakening. The BRICS alignment is forcing the West to reckon with a new geopolitical order. Seemingly grasping at straws to try to retain its dominant position, the US has been threatening to start a plethora of wars without clear ability to succeed. Furthermore, internal politics in the US have never been more contentious and divisive. With the rise of fascism, and it's conspiracy-prone base, those who care about people and approach social organization logically are looking for alternatives. The perfect conditions for an insurgency are amassing: the US is waning as a global power, it hosts a wildly divided population and has no plan in place for people's survival.

The potential success of an insurgent struggle is greater now than ever before. The global order will look very different in the span of a few years to decades. The fall of the brutal hegemony of the US could lead to a restructuring of political and economic relations around the globe. It would be ideal if new forms of society had a liberatory characteristic and to do that comrades in the US can start laying the groundwork for an insurgency.

How to start building an insurgency

The first step is to set up political organization(s). Members should be aligned in terms of ideology, strategy and, most importantly, around revolutionary rather than radical or reformist goals.

Participants can form either one large organization or facilitate a network of aligned groups. The choice between a network or organization depends on the dispositions of those involved and currently existing formations. Political groups should agree on a structure for their organization and roles of the members, while networks should agree on how organizations will communicate effectively with each other and roles of each group. Both should agree on revolutionary outcomes, codes of behavior,

your children.’”[xiii]

Starting the armed struggle and ultimately maintaining a territory is based on the consent of the people in it. Truly liberatory political and social organizations are the key. If people agree with what revolutionaries are doing, they will participate in the self-governance of their neighborhoods and protect the guerrillas, if they disagree, they won't sustain the insurgency.

Al Quds Brigades, Tulkarm

2) Fighting Forces

“The urban guerrilla's weapons are inferior to the enemy's, but from the moral point of view, the urban guerrilla has an undeniable superiority.”[xiv] - Marighella

Guerrilla Struggle

The goal of fighting forces is to demoralize the enemy and win popular support. The armed work of an insurgency starts with guerrilla units. Due to flexibility and mobility, the guerrilla has the ability to launch attacks anywhere and disappear. Hidden amongst the population, the insurgent chooses when and where to attack, making their attacks unpredictable.

The tactical advantage is with the insurgent at this stage. The state must prove that it can retain order, whereas the insurgent only has to challenge the authority of the state. The state has to spend a lot of money to protect its assets and chase down insurgents, but insurgents can launch effective attacks very inexpensively at targets which are plentiful and in the open.

Time is on the side of the insurgent. An insurgent force can be assembled long before a single bullet is fired.[xv] Fighters can prepare for years or decades, striking only when the time is right. The EZLN built its forces for over ten years before attacking the state, presenting revolutionary ideas to villagers and systematically recruiting fighters. Taking time to build armed groups concertedly and growing slowly in qualitative force allows for the development of politically aligned and well-trained guerrillas, ready to take action when the time is right.

Guerrilla units are small groups consisting of only a few people, who independently launch attacks to harass the enemy. They are self-contained cells that pick their own targets, but are connected to other units through the guerrilla code, political objectives and allegiance to the overall mission. There is a role for each member of a guerrilla cell, and these roles should overlap in case one person is captured or killed. They can be assembled into columns or sections for larger attacks like ambushes if the conditions are right.

EZLN fighters headed to the mountains

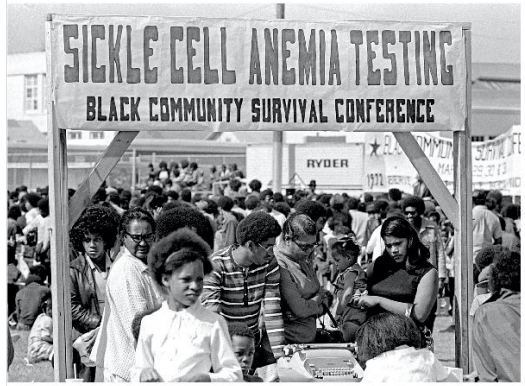
The purpose of the guerrilla forces is to make it impossible for the state to govern (by overextending the enemy, controlling the pace of the fight, for example), defend the population (by attacking state forces who brutalize people), survive (by planning attacks wisely, evading capture, setting up secure infrastructure), support political initiatives, and eventually to take and defend territory.

overwhelming force, as it risks alienating people and driving them further from its cause.

For example, Safiya Bukhari astutely noted that the New York Police Department made her a member of Black Panther Party. Bukhari was a middle class college student who got involved in the movement after she was arrested for defending a Black Panther from police harassment. She learned from this episode that she had no rights, which galvanized her to join the Party and eventually the Black Liberation Army.

Trump's execution of Michael Reinoehl in cold blood when he was on the run for shooting a fascist, South Carolina bringing back the firing squad for 'legal' executions[xxvii], the popularity of the shooting of a healthcare CEO, the impunity of police to shoot people of color, masked ICE agents tearing families apart, all show that the US state is dead set on losing the war for the population. The overriding indifference of the US government to recognize the humanity of people, particularly people of color, within its borders creates a situation where people want to rid themselves of its hegemony.

The oligarchic nature of the US state, coupled with massive wealth disparity creates the potential ground for class war.[xxviii] The US's dependence on capitalist infrastructure further exacerbates its problems. This is a major issue for the state in the face of internal armed struggle, and a huge field of potential for the insurgent. Without a social safety net, the population in the US is vulnerable to natural and economic catastrophes. This is quite apparent with the supply-chain disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic or the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Even day to day social problems, like lack of access to medical care, are severe, creating questions about the state's ability to administer its population.



Black Panther Party sickle cell anemia testing

deal of resources, manpower and equipment. Insurgents can use cheaply made weapons to precipitate a great expense for the state. For example, drones made from styrofoam are able to evade detection or tiny drone boats in the Red Sea can damage an aircraft carrier many more times their size and cost. Handmade explosives have the capacity to destroy a tank. Small, cheap and effective devices make it difficult for the counterinsurgent to avoid attacks.

Drone boat preparation in Yemen

Counterinsurgency doctrine of the Army and Marines is considered to be the most forward thinking treatise on this type of military strategy. Even with lessons learned from military debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US doctrine still demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding about the motivations of an insurgent. Given the extreme lack of empathy for people's lives, it is seemingly impossible for military strategists to fathom that others may be driven by genuine concern for their fellow humans[xxv]. The lack of compassion for the people coupled with a misreading of their adversary makes it difficult for the institutions of the US state to respond appropriately to challenges.

For example, in Afghanistan, US soldiers stationed in Restrepo held a weekly meeting with local elders meant to create connections to win them over and solicit their help routing out insurgents. When questioned by an elder about someone they detained, the soldier in charge became frustrated and finally exclaimed, “You're not understanding that I don't fucking care!”[xxvi] This poignant example illustrates the overall military culture, not to mention US culture, that demonstrates a fundamental disinterest in effective counterinsurgency tactics, even when they are in its best interest.

For its own sake, the counterinsurgent should not respond to guerrilla attacks with

Beyond the Guerrilla Struggle

Building of social organizations, the solidarity of the population and the strength of fighting forces will allow guerrillas at a certain point to establish bases and expel the state from their strongholds. Insurgent-controlled areas are those where revolutionary organizations and values prevail and the state no longer has control through administration or force. At this point the guerrilla struggle continues in new areas that are now contested, partially governed by the state.

The transition between hit and run guerrilla warfare and the security of a liberated area necessitates a delicate balance. Forces are needed to both defend the area and to contest regions beyond that territory. For revolutionary fighting forces to drive out the state and maintain a liberated territory, there needs to be a higher level of coordination, strategy and organization.

If we look at the example of the Great Dismal Swamp Maroon, it becomes clear that it is difficult to maintain an island of liberated land within enemy territory. Formerly enslaved people who escape plantations took refuge in the forbidding terrain of the Great Dismal Swamp. Here armed groups would coalesce as needed to coordinate on raids, defend their territory and free other enslaved people. At first the Maroon was impossible to broach by enemy forces due to impassible geography, but eventually the state developed the land, making it no longer functional as a refuge.

The state was able to destroy the territory because its economic and administrative structure remained intact. An insurgent movement needs to push the state's administrative structure into disarray otherwise the enemy will be able to challenge a liberated area through means beyond armed force.

On the other hand, it is not feasible to go to war outside a liberated area without sufficient protection for that region. The Shinmin Prefecture was an anarchist region in Manchuria comprised of 2 million people. The Korean Anarchist Federation had established self-governing institutions such as mutual banks, workers cooperatives, and liberatory education. Their local militia was supplemented by guerrilla fighters and the region supported guerrilla attacks against imperial Japan in Korea from 1929-1931. However these attacks drew the ire of the Japanese, who sent their agents to infiltrate and assassinate key figures and without sufficient defense of the territory to support the guerrilla actions abroad, an invasion was the death blow.

The Great Dismal Swamp was strong on defense, while the Shinmin Prefecture was more focused on destroying their enemies abroad. Both regions had the problem of being stand alone territories where 1) the guerrillas were not hidden within a enemy-administered populations 2) the insurgents were not able to achieve the balance between defense and attack and 3) the growth of liberated territories was not commensurate with balanced defense and offense.

What is also clear from these examples is that forces defending a territory cannot maintain a guerrilla characteristic and expect longterm existence. A different formation

is needed to defend a liberated area. The defense of a territory must be sufficient, and include an offensive component to challenge the terrain of the enemy. Offensive actions and their range must be chosen wisely so as not to generate more enemies than a liberated area can handle. There needs to be a high level of strategic coordination between guerrillas and defense forces of a liberated area.

While at the current moment it seems the movement is some time off from taking and holding territory, it is important to consider the structure and participation in the defense of a territory even during the nascent part of building guerrilla forces. More complex forms of organization and coordination are needed. There can be a strong connection between fighters and councils on a local level, tying defense to political will, but there also needs to be a means for fighting forces working together across broad swathes of geography, and much more concerted coordination in terms of strategy, tactics and logistical support. As fighting groups are trained and built, so should the organizational apparatus that will sustain the fight past the guerrilla stage. This stage is very advantageous tactically for the insurgent, but also the most precarious.

Holding territory can be dangerous while the state is still powerful. The guerrillas can ebb and flow from regions, establishing bases when it is politically and militarily feasible, and ceding it temporarily so as not to get into a head-on fight. Often making a stand does not play to the strengths of an insurgent force. When temporarily ceding territory, informants, sleeper cells and political organizations can remain in place to coordinate with returning guerrillas and make it hard for the state to truly regain a foothold.

3) Political Education

Insurgencies thrive by being able to address grievances that the state will not. Anarcho-communism presents a range of salient proposals for nearly every facet of life, from collective self-governance to justice to ecology, but there will be strategic moments when putting one or two of those points forward will have the strongest, most wide-spread appeal. Picking the right points to center on at the right times is essential for rallying people toward the cause. For example, the height of the George Floyd Uprising would not be the right time to focus on ecology. The rallying point(s) can change depending on current events and can even be different for different segments of the population. An essential factor is that the points chosen should not be ones the state can fix; they must last the duration of the insurgency.

Propaganda and media serve the important role of isolating the state from the people, making it clear that the hardships people suffer are the unnecessary effects of the US government and capitalist economy. They also work in tandem with revolutionary school curriculum to reinforce a revolutionary narrative.

Revolutionary schools have the important role of helping people understand the role of the state and capitalism, familiarizing people with the history of resistance and

Why an insurgency would succeed in the US

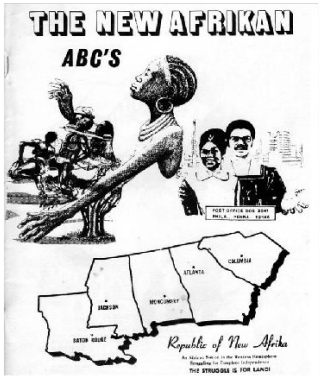
The strengths of the US become its weaknesses in the face of an insurgency.

The US is hubristically proud of its military might. Military spending far outpaces any other nation, with its spending in 2020 amounting to the same as the next nine highest nations. Equipment and tactics developed in the military are deployed in local police departments as well. From SWAT teams to the FBI to the Department of Homeland Security to militarized police, local residents are bombarded with highly technological and militarized state force.

Within the dynamics of asymmetrical warfare, these are the conditions where the insurgent has the advantage. A more technologically advanced and equipment-laden enemy is too cumbersome to counter guerrilla fighters. Complex apparatuses become a hindrance and the top-down structure can't pivot quickly enough. Even the Marines agree, “A modern military force capable of waging war against a large conventional force may find itself ill-prepared for a 'small' war against a lightly equipped guerrilla force.”[xxiv] Meticulously recorded videos of the resistance in Palestine show fighters emerging from tunnels to plant bombs on tanks that are not equipped to counter such a close and agile combatant. The modern military is weighed down by its own equipment and structure. Tanks become lumbering death traps. The tactical advantage is with the fighters who don't have their assets in the open and have the ability for evasion. An insurgent has the capacity to remain invisible on its home terrain and arise at unexpected points to attack and quickly disappear.

Palestinian Resistance fighter placing a bomb on a tank

An insurgency is cheap for the insurgents, while it is expensive for the state. To appear in control, the state must do its best to stamp out fighters, which takes a great



Text by the Republic of New Africa

There remains the question: how protect the movement from actors with a right wing political ideology. First, getting people to sympathize and participate in the movement will create fewer enemies. While there is a right-wing political bent currently throughout the US, this should not be considered a static fact. It is important to consider that the many communities that vocalize right wing views didn't always do so and do so now because of concerted propaganda efforts on the part of state actors. Being a proactive political movement means engaging in activities and messaging that will effect a change in this failing perspective. Yet it is important to note at this point that reactionaries should not be the focus of efforts. Propaganda efforts can be far reaching enough that they happen to reach right wing people, driving a wedge between those who are deeply racist, xenophobic, etc, and those who actually care about others.

The ideologically hardened right wingers are essentially enemy combatants. Whether they are currently active is not so much a question. If allowed to remain in a territory, they may be or could become agents of the counterinsurgent. They must be thoroughly disabled and removed from liberated territories. It is important to begin considering how to deal with these factions from the perspective of an abolitionist movement. Complete annihilation is essential.

building skills that are relevant and useful for a revolutionary society. All subjects taught in these schools are oriented towards creating a better society for all people. For example, Zapatista education provides knowledge about agronomy which helps people in Chiapas become self-sufficient. Or Black Panther schools recounted the history of the United states from the perspective of their communities.

It is impossible for people to get behind a cause when they don't understand the basic political spectrum. People in the United States are heavily propagandized and most have received poor education. It is essential to build up people's political understanding and inform them about the histories of oppression and resistance. Political education can take place through multiple mediums such as revolutionary schools, mass propaganda and the guerrilla struggle itself.

Organizing can work as propaganda to draw clear battle lines and create conditions for the struggle. For example, to demonstrate the necessity of guerrilla struggle, revolutionaries can launch a community campaign. Black Liberation Army founder, Dhoruba Bin Wahad, has suggested calling for community control of the police, which is a logical proposal to help solve their rampant murders of black and brown people. However it is a request that the state will never meet. The proposal functions to organize communities of opposition on a local level and the intransigence of the state demonstrates the necessity for revolutionary defense forces to step in.

Black Panther school

4) Revolutionary Culture

A fundamental cultural shift is essential for revolutionary work in the US. Political and social organizations and fighting forces embody this culture, creating goodwill

within local communities.[xvi]

Revolutionary culture requires a collective approach to the struggle. Political actors should be selfless, stand up, steadfast, hold true to their word and show respect for themselves and those who are most disadvantaged in bourgeois society. These qualities are fundamental for achieving a society where every member cares for and is responsible for all the others. The welfare of those who are the most vulnerable become the obligation of all. A leftist revolutionary movement demonstrates a commitment to life and community.

Revolutionary culture runs counter to acculturation in the US, which has indoctrinated people to act against their self-interest. People are socialized from a young age to distrust their neighbors, turn their backs on people in need and look out for themselves before anyone else. This may be the hardest aspect to overcome for developing an effective movement in the US.

The evidence of US culture permeating the movement lies in the thousands of failed political groups, the constant fractures and insurmountable conflicts between comrades, people using the movement to fundraise or do research for their careers, individuals demanding social credit for their revolutionary contributions, an ideological emphasis on isolated, personal initiatives to drive political work and political groups whose policy it is to instrumentalize people in order to achieve their goals.

It is important for people involved in revolutionary work to shed the alienating and competitive ways that have been forced on people by the US regime, in order to build effective collaboration and trust. Cooperation and trust are the bedrock of the the movement, holding it together through difficult situations, and demonstrating the types of relationships that unite a liberatory political project. When people join the movement, they will be acculturated to cooperating with each other.

5) Material Considerations for Success

Infrastructure requirements include access to and control over communications, food, finances, arms, transportation, means to disseminate information and the ability to supply resources to insurgents and the population.

Logistic and communication networks, independent of the state, serves fighting forces and the population. They are set up with the consideration that the state will try to surveil and disrupt, fully understanding that removing pipelines of resources and information is a good way to incapacitate the insurgent force.

Arms and tactics training are key. This can happen with a supportive army. For example, in 1982 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) set up a training camp in the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon in response to 'Israel's' invasion.[xvii] Many insurgent groups such as PFLP, Hezbollah, Asala, the Red Brigades and the PKK trained there. Armed training can also happen within the army of the enemy state. Many of the great militants of the Black Liberation Army, like Kuwasi Balagoon were trained by the US army.

of helplessness that the state wants to project on people. In the US, there are many communities that are targeted or sidelined by the state, but no one wants to accept a victim role. In fact, this is a dynamic that helps the state control people, and also one that the non-profit industry preys on. Creating an alternative where people can live with dignity, cultivating a culture of respect and creating the capacity to win is key for building self-actualization through struggle. The genuine self-sufficiency of revolutionary communities is an attractive proposal to people who have historically been oppressed.

One of the greatest examples of US brutality is the prison system. It is also the most concentrated population of politicized people in the country. This legacy is thanks to prison organizers like the Nation of Islam, George Jackson, the Black Panthers and incarcerated members of armed struggle groups like the United Freedom Front and the Black Liberation Army. The teachings of comrades from previous generations set the stage for continued work in this vein and for prison uprisings like Attica, Lucasville, and the Vaughn Prison Uprising and the multitude of prison strikes set in motion by Jailhouse Lawyers Speak and many others. People locked up and terrorized daily by the state forces understand the force required to stop them. The proliferation of George Jackson style study groups in many prisons today, some named after him, is testament to this continued political legacy.

Many of those organizing inside would like to participate in movements on the outside but have to deal with the very real problem of securing housing, food, etc. once released. The infrastructure inherent in building an insurgency has the capacity of creating a support structure for these militants, as well as counteracting the state's intention to rob people of their means of survival. In revolutionary Spain, for example, it wasn't just liberated fighters reuniting with the battalions who broke open prisons; many people they had politicized joined as well.[xxiii]

People in prison are an acute example of people who support an insurgency, but there are many others who are routinely terrorized like young people of color, migrants, people lacking money and resources and politicized young people. An insurgent strategy offers a path towards stability and respect.

It is clear is that through an insurgent struggle not everyone will shift further to the left or change their views. While armed leftist action brings the political center toward the left, it also serves to further entrench elements of the right in its anti-social positions. There will always be the minority that supports reactionary objectives. There are two points to consider: Balkanization and suppression.

A common misconception in revolutionary work is that the entire territory of the US needs to be liberated. This is a difficult proposal given many people's right-wing views and vastness of the geography. A more realistic idea is akin to the proposal of the Republic of New Africa to section off a part of the South – a Balkanization of the territory occupied by the United states.

This precedent is reflected in the boom in membership in the Black Panther Party following their armed protest on the floor of the California state Capitol. It can also be observed in the public assistance for armed struggle groups in the 1960's-1980's, and the support of radicals in the US for the events of October 7th in Palestine.

Palestinians wave the flag on a Zionist tank on October 7th

Furthermore, during uprisings, sympathy for radical change becomes far more widespread. The George Floyd Uprising elicited support from many sectors of society. Both potential political actors and unpoliticized people were won over by the widespread demonstration of popular sentiment and the virulence of the uprisings. As demonstrators began challenging the police, support for their initiative grew and acceptance of the police fell dramatically.

Being very clear and open about armed struggle can quickly bring in participants. In Chiapas, the EZLN started their work by explicitly building a guerrilla force and clearly expressing their intention to initiate an armed struggle to potential supporters. This drew people towards the struggle by demonstrating a commitment to success and means for people to effect a material change within their communities. There already exists an impetus to take armed action against colonial adversaries, like Willem van Spronsen's attack on ICE. These public displays demonstrate a groundswell of popular sentiment that could be organized into a cohesive force.

While armed action pushes prevailing opinion further left, armed action complemented by social organizations becomes a thoroughly convincing force. Social programs indicate the genuine intention of political actors to better people's lives and facilitate people joining the effort.

The combination of armed struggle and social organizations counteract the feeling

PFLP fighters patrolling the Beqaa Valley

There are three main ways for acquiring weapons: capturing them from the enemy, external supply and/or production. A common maxim for insurgencies is that the fight feeds the fight. Weapons captured from the enemy become the insurgent's weapons. An external pipeline of financial, technical support and supplies can increase capacity and extend the types of weapons. In addition, an internal means of production should be developed. This ensures a back up if other means are compromised. For example, when supply routes were threatened by the change of government in Syria, the Palestinian Resistance still had their workshops.

Intelligence on state capacity, enemy figures in key position, arsenal and plans of action is essential. Infiltration of the police and armed forces can be established prior to the initiation of the armed struggle and provide pertinent information. The state has contingency plans for crises and responding to attacks, which are readily available. Insurgents use this information to set traps to use their own plans against them.

An important part of a revolutionary insurgent struggle is that it intends to build a different economic system. This alternative system begins at the outset of a struggle as a way of circulating resources to those who are participants. However money will certainly be necessary. Funding can be planned well in advance of the beginning of the armed struggle, diversifying sources and obscuring where they are held. Funding can come in the form of external support, draining that of the enemy, and community

support.

With these factors in mind, it is clear why an analysis of multiple insurgencies suggests that the likelihood of success will increase based on 1) the remoteness from the center of the counterinsurgent's power 2) the ability for the insurgent to move across an international border 3) international alliances and 4) a local administrative vacuum. In consideration of the physical demands of an insurgency a temperate climate and a spread out population add an advantage.[xviii] While all these conditions may not necessarily be met in every case where political organizations form, they are useful to consider when launching a struggle.

6) Strategic Timing

An insurgency has the tactical advantage of being able to wait, building up sufficient forces and popular support and striking at a time and location of its choosing. Training and organization can be developed to a high degree before the armed struggle begins.

A crisis or weakening of the state is helpful for launching an insurgency. For example, anti-colonial insurgencies didn't succeed before 1938, when World War II weakened European states. The insurgent can wait for a moment when the US is tied up in military conflicts and has exhausted its resources, or is lacking popular support. A war on its own soil against an external enemy could, for example, provide the right conditions. Or engaging in multiple armed conflicts abroad would weaken the US state and diminish its international standing, creating an opening for the insurgent.

Strategic timing does not just refer to selecting an appropriate time for the initiation of armed action, but also choices made throughout the conflict.

Once armed action begins, it is important to keep up the pacing and pressure. The state will have the strongest chance of stamping out an insurgency during the initial period, the guerrilla struggle, due to functioning administrative control. To quash an insurgency, the state needs to arrest guerrillas, regain the trust of the population and instate compliant leaders through elections. For this work the state depends on pre-existing civil structures like the police, non-profits, local representatives and social services. This administrative power is very effective at stifling rebellions. The momentum of the George Floyd Uprising was successfully derailed by coordinated civil actions including elected representatives speaking out at marches, legal proceedings being issued against Derek Chauvin and city-to-city coordinated police action against demonstrators.[xix]

It is important for the insurgent to make the state's civic bodies unable to function, drawing the conflict into a military terrain. The US Army Marine Counterinsurgency Manual confirms: “Controlling the level of violence is a key aspect of the struggle. A high level of violence often benefits insurgents. The societal insecurity that violence brings discourages or precludes nonmilitary organizations, particularly [administrative

proxies of the counter-insurgent]”, which the Manual identifies as, “diplomats, police, politicians, humanitarian aid workers, contractors, and local leaders.”[xx] The guerrilla, Carlos Marighella confirms, “The role of the urban guerrilla, in order to win the support of the population, is to continue fighting...heightening the disastrous situation within which the government must act.”[xxi]

Marghiella also emphasizes that, “keeping in mind the interests of the people,” during this process is essential. The insurgent must precisely balance the need to combatively overwhelm the administrative capacity of the state with the need to maintain the goodwill of the population. During the early stages, the insurgent can control the pacing and tenor of the fight and can time it to best suit the social and strategic conditions at each moment.

However launching the armed attack is not just about watching and waiting for an opening, but creating the conditions for the struggle to flourish. It is essential to undermine US civic institutions, eroding popular faith in them, sowing dissent within their ranks and drawing people toward revolutionary social organizations. Increasing distrust in US civic bodies is not a difficult proposal. With dissatisfaction already quite high, insurgent social organizations have fertile ground to grow.

The considerations about strategic timing demonstrate that an insurgency requires a lengthy investment of time. From comprehensive training and research to creating the ideal social conditions for the armed struggle, it is a longterm commitment on the part of the insurgent.

Who would support an insurgency

In counterinsurgency theory the population is broken down into a perhaps overly simplistic, yet useful, formula: an active minority on the side of the state, an active minority on the side of the insurgent, and a large group of people in the middle that want to go about their daily lives with reasonable stability. Victory will theoretically tilt in favor of the side that can provide the better life.[xxii]

Currently, without an institutionalized left, and with the lack of general political understanding, the politics of the center produce an acceptance for a brutal and degraded life. It is impossible to talk about a war for the population without acknowledging that the political tenor in the US is by and large extremely right wing.

The question is how to move people further to the left. Part of the answer lies in the armed struggle itself. Armed action from the radical left moves the center further left. It galvanizes people, forcing them to take sides and it creates a new pole of far left politics. When the seriousness of the demands is expressed by the requisite force to achieve it, it is more convincing than rhetoric.